

## **National Weather Service Tampa Bay Area - Ruskin, FL Staff Successful in Passing the Technician Class Amateur Radio (HAM) License Test**

The National Weather Service Tampa Bay Area Weather Forecast Office (WFO) congratulates staff who recently completed a four day training course and passed the Technician Class Amateur Radio License exam. The class was a great success and the Tampa Bay WFO now has 11 licensed amateur radio operators among its staff! The new *ham* radio operators are:

**Tony Reynes, Nicole Carlisle, Todd Barron, Tom Dougherty,  
Colleen Rhea, Ernie Jillson, and Charlie Paxton**



In class (left to right): Tom Dougherty, Nicole Carlisle, Todd Barron, Charlie Paxton, Ernie Jillson, and Tony Reynes.

We are very proud of all of them for their hard work, great enthusiasm, and determination to succeed. In addition to the NWS staff, two gentlemen, Robert Medina and Albert Clark from neighboring Sun City Center, FL attended the classes and testing session. They too passed the test and are new hams. That brought the total number of students taking the class and test to nine!

The four day training, coordinated by NWS Senior Forecaster Nick Petro WX3H, was conducted by several members of the Kings Point and the Sun City Center Amateur Radio Clubs (KPARC and SCCARC). The topics covered in the class related to rules and regulations, associated frequencies, radio physics, and safety. The Tampa Bay WFO would like to thank the many volunteers from these clubs for their time and effort in conducting the training and examinations. The instructors and volunteer examiners included: Anita Akridge AI4YV Training Coordinator for KPARC AND SCCARC, Russell Akridge AD4ZR VP KPARC, Dick Bishop W4NWD President KPARC, Sam Brandes N2OF Secretary KPARC, Don Nathan K2GPM, Bob Goldberg WA4M head examiner, David Schierenbeck N8PF President SCCARC, and Jim Key KI4TMX.

Amateur radio was the only means of communication immediately after the land fall of hurricanes Katrina and Charley. When ordinary communication methods fail, amateur radio steps in to provide critical communication links. Given that 90% of all presidentially declared disasters are weather related, the Tampa Bay WFO recognizes the need for trained amateur radio operators among its staff. The newly trained staff will be able to better communicate with other amateur radio operators in

times of crisis. Tampa Bay WFO has HF, VHF, UHF, and digital radios, and is able to communicate both short and long distances on amateur radio frequencies and using emergency backup power. The radio station is routinely used for SKYWARN spotter operations and informational weather nets. For more information about the Tampa Bay WFO amateur radio program, please visit the SKYWARN link at <http://weather.gov/tampa> .

**Once again, congratulations to our new *hams*!**



**New Hams: Tony Reynes, Ernie Jillson, Nicole Carlisle, Tom Dougherty, and Todd Barron**



**New Hams: Colleen Rhea and Charlie Paxton, and instructor Anita Akridge, AI4YV**



**Kings Point Amateur Radio Club Instructors/Testers (Left to Right): Russell Akridge AD4ZR VP for Kings Point ARC, David Schierenbeck N8PF President SCCARC, Bob Goldberg WA4M head examiner, Dick Bishop W4NWD President KPARC, Jim Key KI4TMX, and Anita Akridge AI4YV Training Coordinator for KPARC AND SCCARC.**